UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Computer Centre

NEWSLETTER

authorization: Director of the Computer Centre

1   TERMINAL PERFORMANCE

As from the 1st July 1973, the Australian Post Office became the
sole supplier of modems for use on APO lines.   All new terminal
installations, therefore, have modems which are installed and
maintained by the APO. We now have twenty such modems. We
noticed that as the number of modems increased, we were having
more problems with our PDP-8 communications interface running
slow and finally crashing.   Our Computer Centre engineers
eventually traced the cause to a design fault in the APO modems.

The problem is that when a user switches off his modem, it should
send a continuous mark signal. Unfortunately, this does not occur
and the modem allows spurious data (inherent with the line
characteristics) to be sent on to the PDP-8.   This places an
interrupt load on the PDP-8 which it was not designed to service.

We reported the fault to the APO and they have agreed that a
design problem exists and they will undertake the necessary
modifications. We have advised them that the problem is getting
worse and they are obtaining urgent delivery of components and
hope that it will only be a matter of days before the modifications
are made.

In the meantime, would all users who have APO modems installed
please keep the modems switched on at all times during normal
working hours and where circumstances permit at other times.

2   CALCOMP-936 PLOTTER WIDTH

The manual "Plotting on the PDP-10", MNT-11, states that the Calcomp-
936 Plotter is 932.6mm wide. It should be added that only a zone
838.5mm wide is accessible by all three pens, so this is the effective
width.   Please note in figure 1.3 on page 1-3 that YMAX is 11.0
inches or 275mm for the Calcomp-565(PLT0:) and 838.5mm for the
Calcomp-936(PLT1:).   These are the limits checked by the basic
plotting routines.

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